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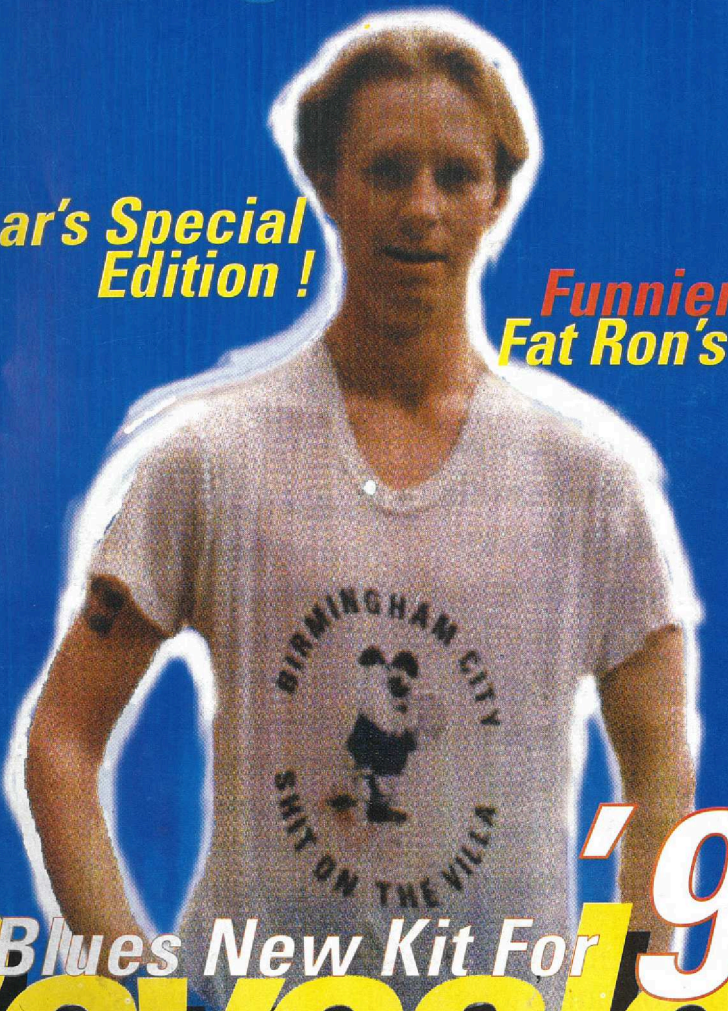

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WAKE UP BLUE-INFO

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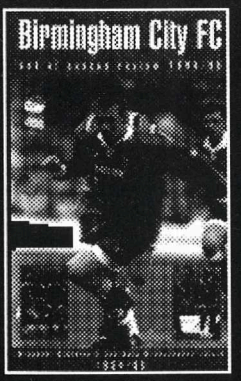

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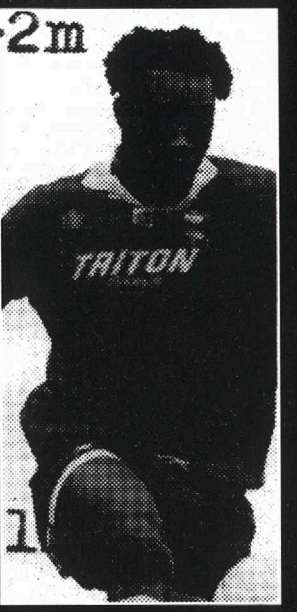

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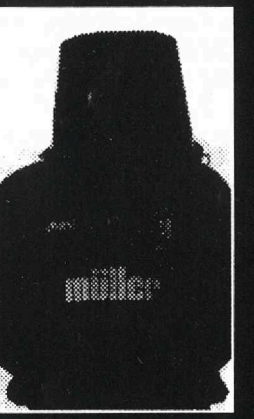
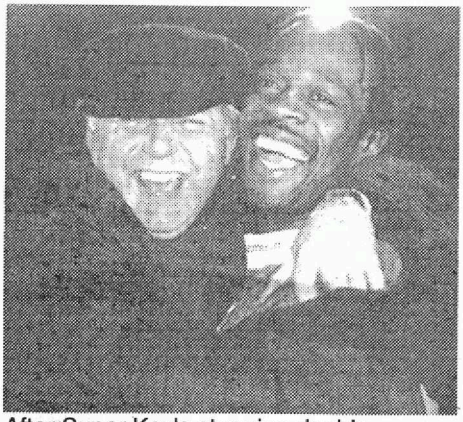


BAZZA OFFERS SOME ADVICE!

INSIDE

plus **exclusive insight - Otto's tactics**

Wake Up Blue says... Wem-ber-lee! Wem-ber-lee! Yes not only do we think that we're going to win promotion but we're going to the Twin Towers again.



After Super Kev's stunning double against 'Boro hopefully it will be in the Coca-Cola but probably our best bet is in the rather less prestigious Anglo- Italian, but I'm certain would guarantee a record amount of supporters for one team going to Wembley. Whilst we're more sceptical of our chances getting through in the Coca-Cola, the fact remains that we are in the last eight in the country and a trip to Norwich should hold no fear for us. This is the closest we've been to a major cup final since the 1984 Watford F.A Cup debacle, which if we'd won would have seen us against Plymouth in the semi-final and then who knows... But over the last two decades this has been the same old story of being a Blues fan - "If only's", "buts" and "we nearly..." are phrases we often use and to be quite honest I'm fed up of it. We ARE a big club and we ARE great supporters and we shouldn't continually be living on hopes and dreams. For too long these wishes have been romantic, fanciful and bloody unrealistic and I think a lot of us have got used to the fact that we've never won anything and subsequently never will, wallowing in the glorious knowledge that we remain the biggest "sleeping giant" in the land; our fame uniquely restricted to this.

But now changes are beginning to happen and despite the traditional and continual sniding from the media in the form of the newspapers and TV personalities such as Hansen, Lynham, Greaves etc. who still refuse to take us seriously, Birmingham City F.C. are on the way up. This year therefore is a watershed and whilst promotion is the priority the Coca-Cola is perhaps our Holy Grail, because we have the chance to put ourselves on the map and be etched in the annals of football history for the first time as genuine winners.

Whilst 'Boro was a fantastic result it remains as a one off; only a major trophy in the St Andrews cabinet will get the acclaim a club of our size and standing deserves. 1996 can be the year of the Blues and the end of the road could be reached with us stepping out into the light of cup winning success...

EDITORIAL

1996 CAN BE THE YEAR OF THE BLUES!

the Changing Wig of football

no 2 in an occasional series

the bighead bastard wig

the michael bolton wig

the terry wogan toupee

the atko afro

the raver ron wig

the Ken Dodd tickler

the ronnamuffin wig

the pamela ronderson

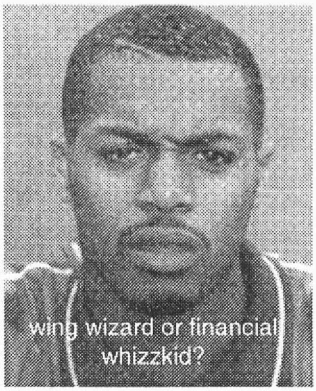
the ridiculous wig!

YOU BALD BASTARD!

Diary

Boro 0 Blues0

Magnificent effort by the boys with king size performances by Cladger and Daishy. Hunt and Hill display brilliant Brazilian skills that eclipse Juninho's (well, they played well!}, in the second half. First half Juninho hits bar from freekick given away by Benno doing a roadrunner type of stop on the 18 yard line. Unfortunately he is actually outside the area with the ball in his


wing wizard or financial whizzkid?

hands but luckily stays on the pitch, receiving only the yellow. Second half sees Blues take the game to 'Boro and SuperSnoop kev heads against the post, with Louie, obviously thinking of the quarter of a million pound replay, cunningly smashing the rebound wide from 1 yard out. Throughout the game the Blue noise boys out sing the North East rabble in impressive fashion. St. Andrews is going to be, in the cliched words of Motson, a cauldron out there!

Southend 3 Blues 1

A nonsense result as Blues relinquish a lead given by a Cladger and just cave in. Bazza describes the team's performance as 'crap', surely underlined by the fact that we let Dave ' I've a famous brother' Regis score against us. Result is even more sickening due to the fact that everybody bar Slumberland lose. A chance to go top is squandered.

Blues 1 Watford 0

What a n-ice day for this one, I think getting up for the game. By 12 o'clock I have thawed out and decide to go the boozer and get my circulation going with a few pints of lager. I thank my lucky stars I have more than a few, because not only does it con me into thinking it's warmer than what it is but also allows a terrible game to pass me by in double quick time. At least we win courtesy of Supersnoop Kev announcing he's back and taller than ever!

Blues 3 Cesana 1

A crowd of just under 8000 watch a game in this tremendously prestigious European competition. (the many other thousand s of Bluenoses

choosing to watch the other European game of less importance- the Ireland- Holland game instead!] Yet the game is surprisingly good with the mainly teenage Italian team capitulating like Mussolini's regime (eeugh! -ed) ,to a pick 'n' mix Blues XI. Cladger and Hunty score but it's Donowa's reappearance and goal that gain the headlines. West Bollocks Albion's win (yes win!) in Italy means a Home tie versus our ridiculously poor (poor being the operative word) neighbours. The winners being one game away from Wem-ber-lee.

ay

Oldham 4
Blues 0
Oh dear! Our worst result of the season sees us drop out of the top six for the first time in ages. Two Bluenoses do get on the score-sheet though, with Pooley diving Bertschin-like, to head past Benno and SuperSnoop Kev makes Otto's own goal against Cambridge a decidedly average finish. Blues look terrible, especially at the back and make Barndoor Barlow a contender for England's European Championship squad. Bazza lets rip telling the side publicly that they were outplayed and perhaps more worryingly outfought; to go up we can't lose like this to shite teams like Oldham. Depressing, let's hope it was a one off. Impressive conga by the bluenose travel club the only highlight.

Blues 2 Boro 0
The result of the season/s that grabbed the national backpage headlines and got rid of our "nearly men" tag. Before the game I couldn't see us doing it, especially in light of our last result. I was proved delightfully

Junin-who?

wrong. Junin-who? only provided a cameo role as Super Snoop Kev took centre stage, firstly crashing the ball past Walsh with a shot and doing the same 10 minutes later with his head. 2-0 and it's ciao (that's goodbye in Brazilian aswell you know!) to the boys from the North East. Hunt and Hill take the piss in midfield whilst Forsyth and Richardson take Bazza's praise with their best ever perfor-

mances in the famous royal blue shirt. Frain is fantastic, Poole is class whilst Daishy and Edwards dominate and destroy every Boro attack. Cladger works his bollocks off and plays the- try-and-get-the-ball-off-me-if-you-can-game in the last 5 minutes. Boro take 7 minutes to get it off him! Super Kev is King and the name Francis returns to St. Andrews in full glory. Neil Cox is crapper than ever and desevedly snowballed. Atmosphere is best in a long time and with a quarter final draw versus those East Anglian giants, Norwich, Wembley beckons. The only question is do we want Villa in the semi or final? Please God let us do it.

Blues 1 Tranmere 0

A classic case of After The Lord Mayor's Show. A Hunty deflected shot gives us 3 points though and a big move up the table to joint third. Performance laboured but our impressive home form continues- only one defeat at St. Andrews. Great crowd of 18000 on the worst day in the year for football attendances.

Sheffield Utd 1 Blues 1

Boxing day. Superb support, not a bad game and a fair result. Super Kev does the biz again but we can't hold on and we have to settle for a point. Never mind, move to third.

Slumberland-Blues POSTPONED

Blues-Wolves POSTPONED

SwapShop

There has been recent talk of swapping Ricky Otto with the former Sheffield United striker Nathan Blake or Sheffield Wednesday's Guy Whittingham, but more realistically we list ten options that Blues could take in initiating an exchange deal.

1. A Family Size C5

2. Samesh Kumar's clothing empire

3. Isla St. Clair

4. Packet of perforated condoms

5. Baldrick's Turnip

6. "PUSH", the super album from Bros

7. The first episode of a 3 part Inspector Morse special dubbed, in Vietnamese

8. Exclusive haircut vouchers for Jim Smith

9. A Hai Karate After Shave set

10. An Italian Government Economic Adviser

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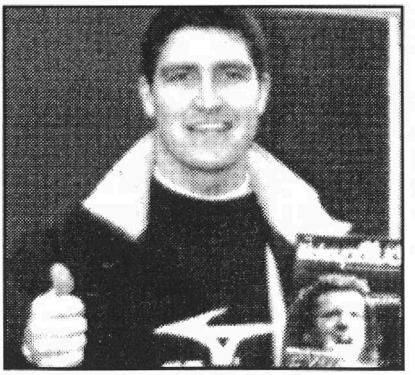

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BUY, FRY

AS LONG AS HE'S A STRI

It has been pleasing to see the resurgence of Blues in the last few seasons. Arguably we are now enjoying our most successful period since the halcyon days of the Seventies. However, although I'm patient like every other Blues fan, I hope this season will not be one of mediocrity. Blues always overcome the first few hurdles, but fall at the last. Just think of the 1975 F.A Cup replay against Fulham.

This season is one that need not be of consolidation. The First division is very tight, highlighted by Millwall, the former leaders of the division, losing one game and slipping to seventh position.

Consistency is the key to winning this division, and Blues can achieve this with their current squad of players. However I'm under no illusions. Blues strongest eleven is only of the same calibre as many other first division sides. This fact means Blues promotion campaign relies heavily on gutsy battling qualities.

Naturally every good side needs these qualities, but they must go hand in hand with skill and a classier style of play. Blues must aspire to this if they don't want the prize of premiership football to be a lottery.

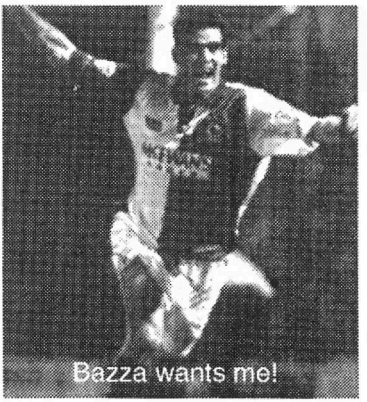
Blues have skill and class existing in the team,but it is too diluted. What I believe to be the solution is to dip into the transfer market firmly with two feet. To avoid the lottery of promotion, Mr Fry should invest £2 million on a quality striker.

It is no disrespect to Super Kev or Charlery who can do an effective job up

WHOEVER IT MAY BE...
KER says Rob Maloney

front, but they are not players who can turn a game on its head. They are reliant on service, where as Blues need a forward who will run at defences and score. Cladger can do this but tends to drift wide becoming more of a provider.

The likes of Mike Newell



Bazza wants me!

or Guy Whittingham (dare I mention his name!) can go it alone. They can receive the ball, run thirty yards, skip two challenges and slot it with comfort in the back of the net. Just think of how Whittingham transformed Portsmouth's fortunes a few seasons ago, when they were an average First division outfit.

These players would cost a substantial figure, but who cares if it gives the team that needed 'x' factor to gain promotion.

With no outstanding team existing in Division one, please Mr Fry,Sullivan and co, lets seize this opportunity and be the men amongst boys. Lets cut out this waiting around and make sure Birmingham City F.C is with the big boys of Murdoch, Hansen and Lynam next season.

UP THE BLUES FOR THE NEW YEAR! Rob Maloney

the secret diary of Ronnie Ekelund

Day 1
Receive a circular sent to everyone who has scored a goal in European football at any level from an English club, Birmingham City. Look on map and see that it is quite close to Alan at Maine Road and uncle Lawrie at Southampton. Ask my agent to contact Mr Bazza Fry.

Day 2
Check the details of the circular and find that I have played for clubs that begin with Bar... and South... . Telephone Mr Fry but realise that there may be a language barrier - I speak English and he speaks Cockney. Check with Jose at Lisbon who confirms that I'll only have to turn up occasionally as a substitute. Sounds my sort of deal. Very bad line, but Jose mumbled something about Stadium of Light to the edge of darkness - very odd.

Day 3
Mr Fry invites me to England. The thought of playing in the same team as Shearer, Trevor Francis and Liam Brady really excites me. Check with Barca airport for flight to Birminum.

Day 4
Confused message on answer machine from Mr Fry, asking for auntie Britt. Return the call to Mr Fry to discuss personal terms. Can I really cope on only £6,000 a week? Sunbeds are expensive in England. Really looking forward to playing on the football club's private golf course at St Andrew's.

Day 5
oooh...me b
Fly to Birminum.
Looking forward to seeing the Bull Ring on a warm evening. It's meant to be similar to The Ramblas in Barca. Picked up by very odd taxi driver. Tells me that he knows Johan at Barca (ugh), and that he once played for Inter Milan. Also mumbles something about being a TV star. Check into Hyatt Hotel and immediately contact room service.

Day 6
Early departure from the Hyatt - same taxi driver (tells me he wad also an astronaut). I'm [laying in a friendly in the Las Vegas of the north (according to Neil Doherty) - Barrow. Odd thing happened at the ground though - A woman in a Porsche drives up and Won't allow me on the coach unless I join the Away Travel

Club. So I pay the fee and climb aboard. Mr Fry tells me this is Liam Brady's sister. Mr Edwin spends most of the journey telling me about her incurable illness. Apparently she had a charisma bypass - sounds serious.

Day 7
Hit the bar at

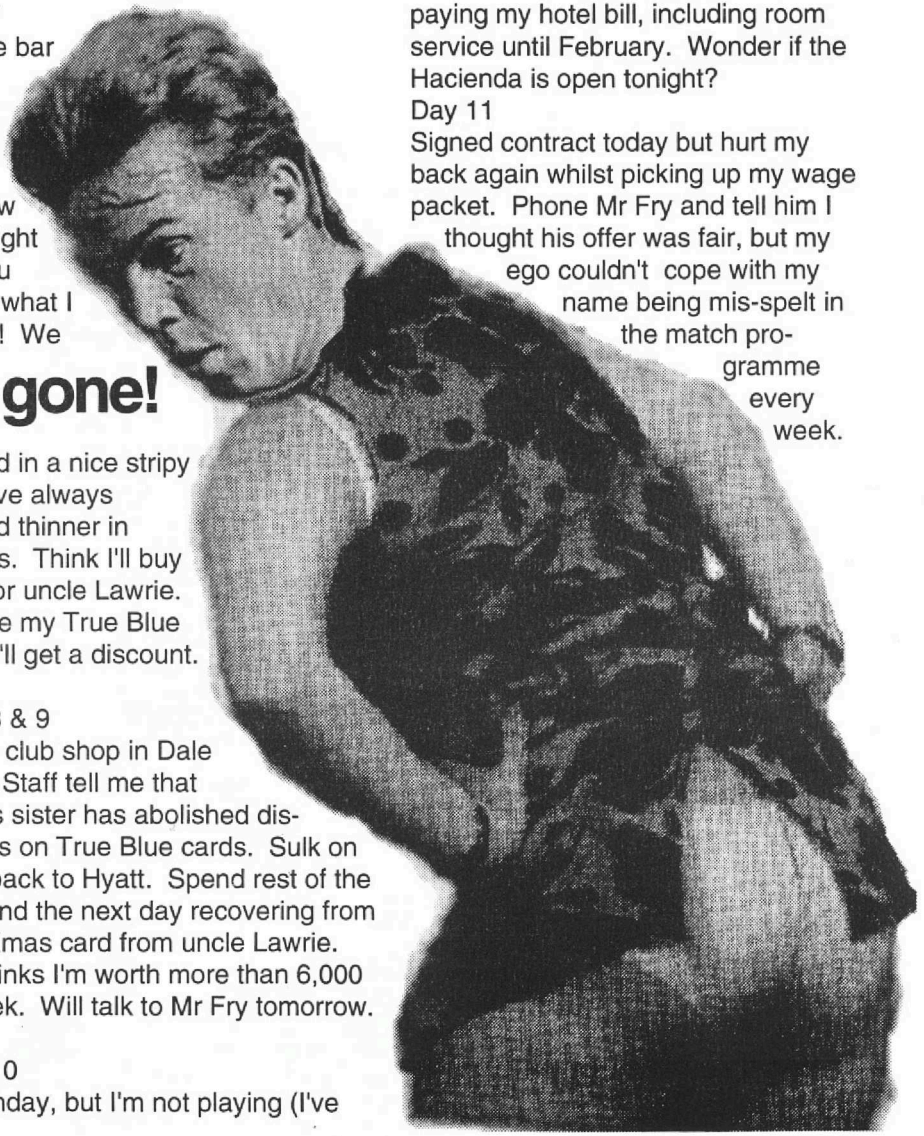
Barrow last night - if you know what I mean! We

ack's gone!

played in a nice stripy kit - I've always looked thinner in stripes. Think I'll buy one for uncle Lawrie. If I use my True Blue card I'll get a discount.

Day 8 & 9
Go to club shop in Dale End. Staff tell me that Liams sister has abolished discounts on True Blue cards. Sulk on way back to Hyatt. Spend rest of the day and the next day recovering from flu. Xmas card from uncle Lawrie. He thinks I'm worth more than 6,000 a week. Will talk to Mr Fry tomorrow.

Day 10
Matchday, but I'm not playing (I've only actually played 5 games for Barca in 2 years. I've got a sore back you know.) for a change! Go on the pitch pre-match with nice Mr Bob and tell the crowd that I love Birminum Sity. 3:05, Leave in limo to see uncle Alan in Manchester. He say she'll subsidise my low wages by paying my hotel bill, including room service until February. Wonder if the Hacienda is open tonight?
Day 11
Signed contract today but hurt my back again whilst picking up my wage packet. Phone Mr Fry and tell him I thought his offer was fair, but my ego couldn't cope with my name being mis-spelt in the match programme every week.



After a successful interview with our intrepid cockney pair, Hunty and Pooley, Wake Up Blue rushed back down to the training ground (well drove rather slowly in a dodgy Nissan Sunny, ignoring the shouts of "Taxi!") and got the dictaphone and camera out. Who was going to be the lucky star this time, to be interviewed by Blues' Number 1 Fanzine?

A day after the 'Boro game, the choice was an easy one. Who else could it be but the man, "the fucking man" as he told us he was, during both his after goal celebrations captured by Central's Midweek Sports Special's cameras. Yes, we interviewed the man who smashed Blues into the quarter finals with an aerial display of such power that it ranked up there with the great individual performances of Latchford, Harford and other Blue legendary leaders of the line. Yes, we've given him a build up but he deserves it so let the chant begin and enjoy the interview with SUPER SUPER KEV SUPER SUPER KEV SUPER SUPER KEV SUPER KEVIN FRANCIS!!

Striding over to meet me I couldn't believe how big our Kev is. Now that may sound stupid as we all know he's 6' 7" and 6' 7" is not exactly a Dominguez sort of height, but I'm 6' 2" and am not used to being dwarfed. Kev won't be HP for me saying that after telling me he's fed up of the height thing, but I tell you, the man's a big bloke! Right, question one...

Super Su

How do you feel after the 'Boro game?
"I feel tremendous, on top of the world. We're into the next round, we've got a top draw and the 2 goals helped me sleep well."

Are you getting back to your best? I ask, after watching him 15 minutes before engaged in a specialist training session involving himself and Siggi being fed balls by Ed Stein and shooting on the Bartman; the big man's finishing looking, to coin a phrase, clinical. Kev speaks confidently, "Finishing wise and that, yeah. I mean, that's the bread and butter of my game putting the ball in the back of the net and that's coming back. I just hope that the match fitness comes back as quickly.

What's it's like playing for the team you supported as a boy and scoring in front of the fans at St Andrews?
"It's like every Blues fan's dream to go out there and score an important goal and I get to live that daydream every day", is his genuine and heartwarming reply. Like Taity and John Frain, Super Kev is Blue through and through, and there's nothing better than having a Brummie Bluenose who's a quality player playing for Birmingham City.

Do your mum and dad watch you play? "Yeah, my mom works shifts and she has trouble getting across but my dad always knocks off early to come and watch me."
Right, the height question.
Do you still get annoyed by people who automatically slate you just because you're 6' 7" and say you're no good? I ask thinking of the lovely London press and their constant jibes of "Beanpole Striker" etc, as well as a

> " anyone who did say anything would get a slap anyway!"

lot of people from around the country who join the band wagon; but incidentally fail to admit they haven't seen the man play. "Yeah" is his immediate and short reply. He waits before expanding on this point. "It's gonna happen all the time, no matter what I do, despite my goal rate of one in two. It's been one in two for the last four and a half years." How many people outside Stockport and Birmingham know that? Kev continues, "and that's better than most people and can't be argued with. They can say what they want at the end of the day, but my goal rate speaks for itself."

Do you get stick on the pitch about it? "No, no not at all" he replies, "most professionals have respect for one another and anyone who did say any-

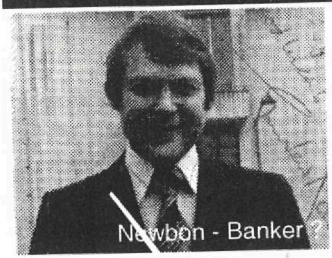
perKev!

thing would get a slap anyway!" he says with a meaningful laugh!

Did you enjoy it at Stockport? "Yeah I did, it was the making of me, it put me on the map and I had four good years there with four appearances at Wembley. It was tremendous."

Do you like Snoop Doggy Dog? I throw in at this juncture of the interview to surprise our Kev. It works! "I do, yeah", he says laughing acknowledging his amazing similarity with gangsta raps baddest brother. I tell him of Wake Up Blue's plans to play on this a little bit and he laughs again which I take to mean he doesn't mind. Good!

"What do I think of Gary Newbon...I agree with everyone else ! "


Newbon - Banker

What do you think of Gary Newbon? is my second question of the planned double whammy, reminding him we're all Blues fans together here and no need for politeness in front of the TV cameras. "He was all right" he says, lying. I can tell by the grin on his face and then says "put it this way, I agree with everyone else!", laughing. Good lad!, considering the list of Gary Newbon haters is as long as Nigel Spink's chin I take his answer to mean as a true Bluenose he has sung along with that song that goes "Gary Newbon, you're a banker, you're a banker!" or something like that.

"Leyland Daf Cup Final... I skived two days off work at Stockport to go down!"

Did you used to go down to St Andrews as a kid? I ask him, both of us still laughing "Yeah, I did. I used to sneak in" I smile at this thinking Kev is the least likely man I've met who could sneak anywhere. Don't you mean step in I ask? "That's one of those tall jokes I don't like." Kev answers with a smile, as I immediately plead with him not to hit me!

Who was your favourite player as a kid? " I always loved strikers but my favourite was probably Glen Hoddle. I liked Bob Latchford and anyone basically who could excite a crowd and put the ball in the back of the net."

What was the most memorable game you have ever watched Blues play in? Kev thinks and says,"Probably the

He's Th

"...there is a lot more they can do but it'll take a lot more effort and there are certain people at the top who can't be bothered to put that effort in."

Leyland Daf cup final when we beat Tranmere. About fifteen or twenty of us went down and I skived two days off work at Stockport to go down!"

Do you think the football authorities are doing enough to combat racism in the sport? is probably one of the most often asked questions to a black player and therefore part of a cliched standard interview, but coming from a black background myself, one I find very important to ask. "No, there is a lot more they can do but it'll take a lot more effort and there is certain people at the top who can't be bothered to put that effort in. It will always happen but it's dying down thankfully but it's gonna take the majority not a minority to stamp it out." Sadly the majority don't speak out.

Is your view like Ian Wright that the black players don't get the support from the top and the anti-racist campaigns within football are token efforts and a waste of time with no genuine chance of changing anything? "No it's not a waste of time. It does need sorting out and I'm willing to stand up and say that, but you need everyone's support because if it's just one or two people supporting it, it's not going to work."

When you came to St Andrews how did you think the crowd reacted to you? "I thought they were all right, when I was at Stockport I came to play Blues I got a bit of a slating, even off my mates and that's naturally going to happen but I think most people appreciate I'm a hard worker and score goals. Since I've come here the reception's been brilliant."

I round off the interview with my last question.

You must get recognised quite often when you're out and about. How do you react to that? "Yeah you get a lot of it. I got a lot more when I was in Stockport because it was smaller. It's starting off now in Birmingham but that's only a good thing because if people are ignoring you, you're not doing your job."

I thank Kevin for the interview and conclude he's a big man on the pitch and a big character off it; bigger than Ferdinand, better than Savo, cooler than Snoop I'm certain Francis mark II is going to go down along side the original as a Blue hero. Why? Because he's the man.

he Man

BLUES

Wake Up Blue has compiled what we think are the top 40 chants that have resounded around St. Andrews over recent years. Whilst this is purely WUB's viewpoint on how the Top 40 should line up, we want YOU to write to us telling us your favourite 3 chants or phone us on 01384-455-433ext2129 and tell us your top 3. Next issue we'll reveal what the official top 10 is sung by the Blue Army!

1. KEEP RIGHT ON
2. SHIT ON THE VILLA
3. LA-LA-LA etc -BLUE-BLUE-BLUE- BLUE song
4. BLUE BLUE "AFRICAN TRIBE" ARMY
5. C'MON LET'S GO TO THE CHAMPIONS BALL!
6. BARRY FRY'S BLUE AND WHITE ARMY
7. SUPER SUPER KEV
8. OH WHEN THE BLUES
9. BLUE ARMY, BLUE ARMY(ECHO)
10. TREVOR FRANCIS WALKS ON WATER!
11. MY OLD MAN USED TO BE A VILLA FAN
12. BIR- MING -HAM, BIR-MING-HAM, BIR-MING-HAM!
13. COCKNEY "NOT VERY NICE PEOPLE" GET OUT OF BRUM
14. BLUES GO DOWN TOGETHER
15. IN THE VILLA SLUMS
16. TAITY RAVE ON!
17. SINGING AYE AYE 'OPPY 'OPPY AYE
18. HEY BLUES(to tune of Beatles Hey Jude)
19. WE ARE BRUMMIES... YES WE ARE
20. GARY NEWBON YOUR A BANKER (mmm...ed)
21. WE'RE BLUE WE'RE WHITE WE'RE F*@KING DYNAMITE

TOP 40

22. GEORGIE GAVIN YOUR A BANKER
23. VILLA! VILLA! (high pitched squeak of course!)
24. YOU'LL GET IT, YOU'LL GET FOOT IN MOUTH
25. COME TO BIRMINGHAM AND YOU WILL SEE...
26. IF YOU ALL HATE VILLA CLAP YOUR HANDS
27. NOEL BLAKE, NOEL BLAKE,NOEL BLAKE...(to Hi-Ho it's off to work we go tune)
28. PESKY THERE'S ONLY ONE PESKY
29. BILLY WRIGHT BILLY WRIGHT BILLY WRIGHT... (When stepping upto take thunderous free kick)
30. ARE YOU SAVO IN DISGUISE!
31. BLUES...BLUES....BLUES (getting progressively louder between claps)
32. ZULU ZULU WARRIOR!
33. THANK YOU DAVID SULL-I-VAN
34. HARK NOW HEAR THE TILTON SING...
35. JOSE...JOSE...JOSE..JOSE!
36. OH FRANKIE FRANKIE FRANKIE FRANKIE FRANKIE FRANKIE WORTHINGTON
37. LET'S ALL HAVE A FRY UP
38. OH ANDY ANDY ANDY ANDY ANDY ANDY KENNEDY!
39. OTTO LITTLE'S IN TROUBLE
40. PSYCHO! PSYCHO! (To Dennis, Van Den Hauwe,)

Blues Reviews

Opening my Christmas presents, I was quite pleased to see that my girlfriend had got me(whoops-I mean Santa had got me for younger readers!) the end of season Video review 1994/95. No matter how bad the quality, it had to be better than watching" Hook", pissed on the cheap lager that my dad always buys me for the festive season. So after Christmas dinner I settled down with my brothers to watch the Blues, banishing the women to do the washing up. The first thing that grabbed us was the completely naff music that accompanies the opening credits, which sounds more tacky than anything Mike Flowers pops could ever hope to achieve. The commentator 's voice, so wonderfully overdubbed that you can almost imagine that he was not there for any of the games, adds to the authentic tinpot feel that, the producers have obviously gone for.The voiceover starts off as mildly amusing, with such gems as "Steve Claridge's goal scoring feats have not gone unnoticed at St .Andrew's "- Really! But after the commentators continual ability to mix up players, pronounce names wrong, state the obvious and come out with cliche after cliche, in a false enthusiastic voice,he ceases to be mildly amusing, but downright annoying. The plus points to the vid are every goal for and against, in every competition are captured, with the often amusing post goal celebrations, involving players and fans. Watch out for Jose's attempt to congratulate Cladger at Swansea away, completely miss and crash into a fence! After a few beers this video gets better, your emotions getting the better of you when Ricky equalises at Anfield, we miss all those penalties, beat Blackpool 7-1 and Cladger goes barmy at Huddersfield. The video also includes extended AWS Final highlights and an interview/ advert for Auto Windscreens, with a heavily make upped Barry Fry . Overall, not bad so a ***BRIAN ROBERTS*** of an award.

RATINGS

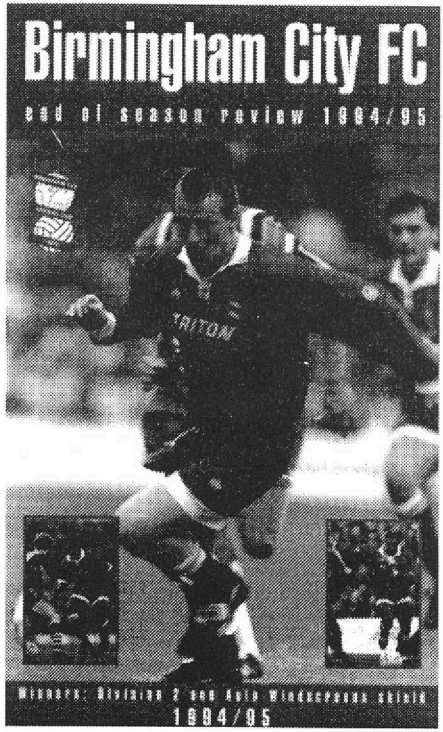
RICHIE MORAN: shit

DEAN PEER: limited

BRIAN ROBERTS: o.k

DOMINGUEZ: good

T.F: The dogs bollocks



Bazza's advice for Gareth "the looker" Southgate...

On a Free !

Here's a chance to win "Birmingham City FC- end of season review 94-95

All you have to do is answer the following question- How many "la's" are in the Blues' new anthem , the "lala blue blue blue blue" song?

Send your answers to ;
ON A FREE!
Unit 1, Enterprise Centre
Dudley College, Mons Hill Site
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Last issues answer was that Welsh dragon, BYRON STEVENSON, who was sold by Ron Saunder's because he attempted to play football. Our lucky winner was a D. McGarvey, Moseley.

***Some Players you Forget.....* Richie Moran**

Some Players you try to Forget.....
Alberto Tarrentini

SOME PLAYERS YOU NEVER FORGET...

Francis...King of the Kop
exclusive design ... limited edition

RAM NIKON

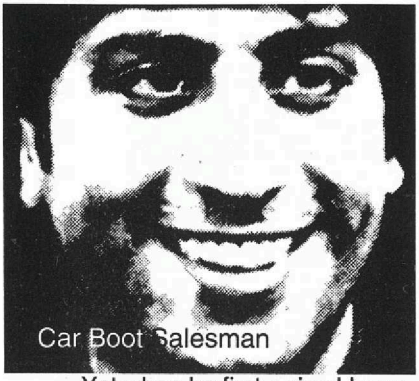
Worthless Bastards Aid

Wake Up Blue in light of it being the season of goodwill, has decided to help our hapless neighbours in their fight against impending relegation and set up a WBA fund- **W**orthless **B**astards **A**id. I'm certain everyone from Blues, Villa, Wolves and Coventry are fed up hearing them whingeing about having no money, so to help them pretend they've got some, cut out the £10 note and send to ; Mr Alan Buckley, The Hawthorns, West Bromwich B71 4LF.

FRY- Fr N

Jimmy O'Kane, our Victor Meldrew of the Kop, asks the questions and gives his opinion on our leader's talents and achievements, during his whirlwind reign at St. Andrews.

Two years after he walked into St. Andrews, Barry Fry has won me over as a hardworking bloke who wants to make the good times return to the club. And that means Premiership football next August. More than that he has put a smile on the face of the club with his humour and antics, his baggy face and even baggier tracksuit trousers.



Yet when he first arrived I was quite cynical of his appointment. After all who were Southend? Where was Barnet? He seemed like a typical cockney Barrow boy who might have fitted in better at one of Samesh Kumar's boot sales. His big talk of promotion followed by a series of ridiculously quick and crap signings, confirmed my feelings that here was an appointment that knew no more about football than me.

I wasn't surprised when his rag bag team got relegated, despite an amazing late run that gave them hope of avoiding the drop right up to the last game. Even then we only dropped on the last day because the Baggies managed to stick it up Pompey's Second XI.

So to bounce straight back last season from Division 2, and make a trip down Wibbly Wobbly Way as an added bonus, was brilliant. Even if it did mean watching deadbeats like Chester and swallowing defeat against the likes of Wycombe. But it was a good season and we did go up as Champions. David Sullivan had dug deep into his pockets and pulled out more piles of cash to finance a new stand and loads of new players; so many in fact that we had the largest squad in any division- 3 teamsworth to be precise plus about 10 new pro's signed from the youth ranks.

The method in Baz's madness was obvious. Even with a long list of

Or method to

uit and utcase

injuries and suspensions and a pile up of fixtures due to the cup run, weather and replays, we would still have enough quality to see us through. To be certain of this Baz iced the "squad cake" with the club's two biggest signings- Ricky and Big Kev.

The result of all this wheeling and dealing, coming and going, buying and selling should be a convincing picture of progress at St. Andrew's.

`Yet as the Victor Meldrew of the Blues (remember I am working from the experience of the past 42 years on the Kop) I AM STILL NOT CONVINCED THAT WE HAVE MOVED FORWARDS THAT MUCH!!!

Baz has grown on me. (what part?-ed) I like him. He is slogging his guts out for B.C.F.C. Yet I am still not convinced that he has bought well enough, managed the club well enough or coached well enough to bring us to the land of the Premiership.

I HOPE HE MAKES ME EAT MY WORDS AND PROVES I'M COMPLETELY WRONG.

As you read this you may be thinking to yourself- What does the miserable sod want? Haven't we just won promotion? Aren't we well placed in the division?
Haven't we had our best cup run in over 10 years? If you are thinking this I can only answer you by posing the following points/ questions to you:

1. The recent defeat at Oldham
, 4-0, was a revealing result. We had a good team out despite injuries and a heavy defeat like this suggests we are not ready for the Promotion battle yet.

2. Youth
. Despite having as many players as Princess Di has boyfriends, we are still loaning and buying; O.K Preece and Hill are good players and we looked short in midfield without Shearer, Tait and Ward, but what about bringing through some of our youth talent in situations like this? Much has been made of our 20 or more players under the age of 21, so why don't we use some of them? What has happened to Jon Bass, for example, who played brilliantly last year against Blackburn in the Hokey-Cokey cup?

Situations like this would be the making of youth players like him. Or are they going to be allowed to drift away like Shearer did when he was a kid? Or the way James Quinn was allowed to leave for Blackpool 2 seasons ago when we all knew he was an outstanding youth prospect.

his madness?

After all, one of the best young Blues teams of all time was built on kids coming through the youth policy. Ask yourself or your dad- or mom- if they remember Francis, Pendrey, Gallagher, Latchford (Dave and Bob), Burns, Martin and all the others who had blue blood running through them since the age of 16.

The *real* Super-Bob

3.Signings/Signings/Signings...

O.K So signing players is part of pro football, Come to think of it it's part of any football! Just ask your local pub team manager who is trying to lure the next pub's best player with a regular bellyful of Tennants!

But it's only a part. When you have players you chose, surely it's only right to mould them into a team, a unit who know each other through and through. So I ask: Can Baz really do this with a history of around 50 transfer deals done in 2 years and without question, more in the pipeline? Some of Baz's signings left before they arrived (Regis, Willis). We know that football is a meat market - you buy 'em- you sell 'em- but should it be an abbatoir?

Perhaps we could look at Sunderland's recent record of making a few choice signings and welding a team unit together on a much smaller squad than Baz's pick'n'mix approach.

4. Timing

When it comes to press announcements and after the match comments Baz definitely takes the biscuit. Two nil down at home to Leicester things couldn't have looked worse, but a fantastic fight inspired by a returned to form Hunty, saw us grab a point. The following Wednesday away to Boro in the cup, saw another fabulous performance from all the lads who wore the Blue shirt. What does Baz do on the Thursday, but only announce that 14 of his squad weren't good enough, and had been circulated for transfer.

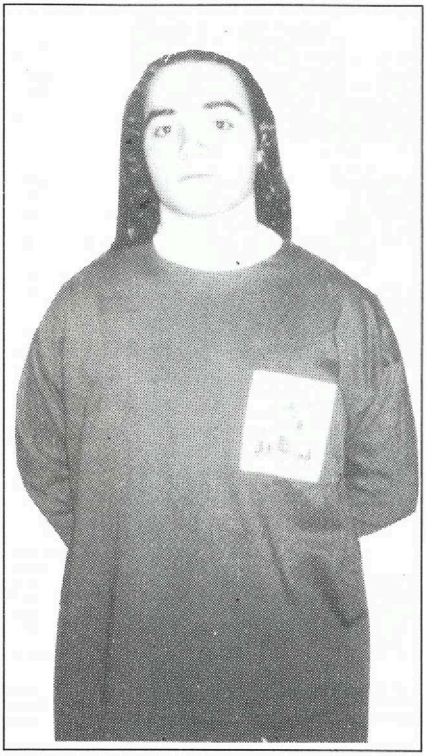
Imagine how Frain, Castle and Charlery must have felt, especially. So there's no room for sentiment in football; if your past your best or just not good enough, you are rightly moved on. But there is a sense of timing about how to do this which keeps club spirit up, especially after a cracking result or two when the lads have played their socks off.

5.The Foreign Connection

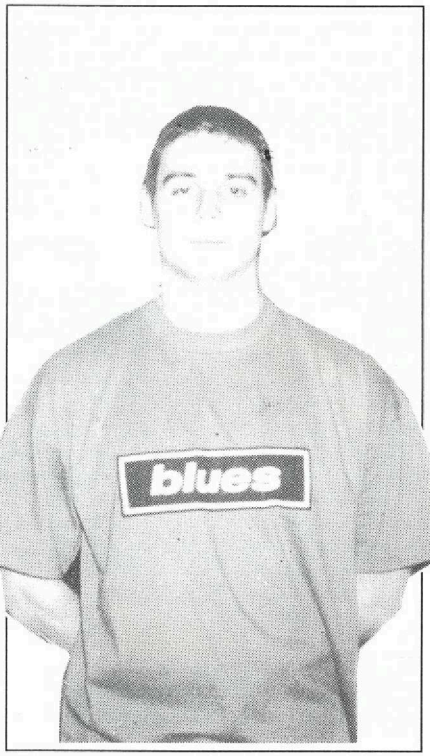
Why does Baz scour the shores of Scandinavian for the likes of Ruschfeldt,Sahlin, Ekelund...before giving the young lads a go. After all, has he ever seen any of them or does he just read their agents blurb? Surely the on-off Ekelund farce has demonstrated the pitfalls of wasting time and energy on blokes who have as much commitment to Blues as Nigel Kennedy.

We love you Baz because you HAVE started to turn the corner for us, but you have had the backing no other Blues manager could ever dream of and therefore are the first manager who can turn turn the dreams of generations into reality. Swallow the load I've written about you and spit it back in my face. If you prove me wrong I'll be delighted, because like it or not, there is an awful lot of us depending on you and what you do.

CLOTHING



Blues Classic 1950's long sleeve



Oasis style Blues T Shirt

See inside back cover for details

Ricky's Team Tactics- ***Pass it around lads !!!!***

blueprint

Send your letters to ***Blueprint*** at ***Wake up Blue.*** Unit One Enterprise Centre ,Dudley College,Mons Hill Site. DY1 3SB. Please include your home address or contact number for correspondence. Letters may be edited.

Cheerio Robbo !

Yeah Robson, what was the score? Who won? Was it Mighty Middlesbrough? Was it f*@k! You lost two nil to Birmingham City who outbattled you, outplayed you and subsequently outscored you. After the match were we handed our rightful plaudits by a gallant manager in defeat, a fair minded person who had witnessed a deserved result? Of course we weren't! We're talking of Bryan Robson here, the man who was the bane of all referees with his constant whingeing, the man who outmoaned Alex Ferguson at Man United, the man who had the dodgiest bubble perm in sport at West Brom (sorry, different subject!). According to our Bry Boro dominated the first half, the first half of what may I ask- the first half a minute! He later went onto say on Central's Midweek Sports Special interview after the game, that we won because it was "our cup final against a Premiership side". What a patronising bastard! Boro are an alright side and get plenty of media attention obviously due to Juninho, and Nick" I'm Terry Venables lovechild" Barmby, but to come to St. Andrews and say it's our cup final only applies to the likes of Liverpool, United and Arsenal; not teams who until last season were shite, had crap crowds and a ground that was as ugly and useless as Nigel Kennedy.

Middlesbrough may have joined the big boys with their new stadium, bandwagon fans and slightly better than average side but they've a long way to go. before declaring that Blues cup final is against a load of imitation Geordies. Next season we might meet them at the same stage of the cup and the pleasure will be all ours in providing them with a little excitement in the dismal North East. So Cheerio Robson, two nil and out.

P.S Brilliant first issue!

Yours sincerely
Dominic Ring,
Acocks Green

Can't agree more with you Dom. Robson is a moaning git, always has been and always will. A vast contrast to our Bazza, who let's face it, when we've played crap doesn't exactly hold back from letting every one in Christendom know! Saying that, whilst Boro were dissapointing, they were never allowed to play by Blues and to suggest that Robbo's lot lost because they played shite is a disservice to our boys. You were right about his bubble perm aswell.

Good Show!

Dear BluePrint.,

Could I just say what a great fanzine Wake Up Blue is- outrageouslyfunny, informative, beautifully presented with free metal staples and a genuinely independent fanzine. Keep Right On..

Yours sincerely
J.C, Yardley

Thanks Dad!

The sex life of Brian..

Dear BluePrint,

I am just writing to say how disgusted I was at your suggestion in Issue 1 that Brian Little is a miserable man and never smiles. When ~~he comes~~ I come into the bedroom wearing stockings,suspenders and a frilly basque I find him looking very happy.

Mrs Little
Sutton Coldfield

What can we say?

Hell's Angel!

Dear BluePrint,

I am writing to tell you how much I felt aggrieved at your article entitled "Can You Believe It", in which you cited me as the angelic leader of the under-11 Holte End Choir. I have never been down the Villa and I am in fact over thirty now, weigh 17 stone, drink mild and am known to sweat profusely.

Yours sincerely,
Aled Jones.

Sorry Aled, please accept our utmost and deepest apologies for insinuating you support Villa. You sound more like a West Brom fan to me.

Seasonal Bluenose greetings from afar...

Our greetings to all Blue noses. Schiten arben und fahrten en das Villa!

Wolfgang Banger, Blues Supporters Club, Hamburg, Germany.

Happee happee New Year to all our friends at Santa Andrews. Sheet on zee Veela. Hokay!

Pablo Pissartisto, Blues Fan Club, Barcelona, Spain.

Sincere best wishes to you all - especially Ricky, tell him I've got two kilo-'s.

Hans van der Bonk, Amsterdam, Holland.

Greetings! May the sunset on our promotion in May. May the gathering tribes in Small Heath cast their eyes to the sky with cries of victory. May the shysters who pretend to play in Aston go down the pan!

Sue lu Warriha
Blues Supporters and Game Park Club, Johannesburg, South Africa.

It's refreshing to know that despite Blues fans coming from all around the world we all speak the same language when it comes to the Villa! Wake up Blue would like to wish all our readers a Happy New Year and Blues a promotion winning season.

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